

REMARKS

Claims 1-48 were pending and presented for examination in this application. In an Office Action dated June 14, 2006, claims 1-48 were rejected.

With this amendment, Applicants cancel claims 12-16, 22-28, 30, 41-44, 46, and 48, introduce new claims 49-50, and amend claims 1, 7, 9-11, 18-20, 29, 32, 35-40, 45, and 47. Support for these amendments may be found at, for example, paragraphs [0017]-[0018], [0021], [0023]-[0028], [0035], [0040]-[0042], [0045]-[0046], [0049]-[0052], [0054], [0065], and [0070], and associated Figures of the specification.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-48 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,981,040 to Konig et. al. Applicants respectfully assert that independent claims 1 and 37, and claims 2-11, 17-21, 49-50, and 38-40 which depend on them are patentable over the cited reference.

Claim 1 recites:

“receiving a request from the user to personalize a search result... responsive to [] the request to personalize the search result, generating a personalized search result by searching a personalized search object”; and

“providing [a] personalized search result and [a] general search result; and visually distinguishing the personalized search result from the general search result.”

Claim 37 includes similar limitations. Generating and providing search results as recited has several advantages. It allows the user to specifically request a personalized search, reflecting personalization preferences that may vary based on, for instance, privacy concerns, search objectives, and the setting of a search. Providing both personalized and general search results and visually distinguishing between them allows the user to better evaluate the results based on how they were generated.

Konig does not show or suggest these elements. In König, information about a user's preferences is obtained through observation of a user's behavior, in contrast to the claimed "request from the user". While König discloses that users may "play games that ascertain user interests and preferences" or that their actions may otherwise be passively monitored, it does not disclose or suggest "receiving a request from a user" as claimed. For example, a user playing a game is clearly not the same as making a request to personalize a search. Any search process described in König is performed without the benefit of searching a personalized search object responsive to a request to personalize the search result as claimed.

Furthermore, König fails to teach or suggest "visually distinguishing the personalized search result from the general search result" as recited in the claimed invention. While König discloses sorting search results in order of interest to a user, no visual distinction between a "personalized search result" and a "general search result" is made in the reference.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-11, 17-21, 49-50, and 37-40 are patentable over König. König also fails to disclose or suggest several additional elements of these dependent claims, such as "receiving from the user a user profile selected from a plurality of user profiles" or "receiving a request to depersonalize a search result" which provide additional independent grounds of patentability.

Remaining pending claims 29, 31-36, 45, and 47 are also patentable over König. Independent claim 29 recites a method for retrieving a page associated with a URL. Among other elements, claim 29 recites:

"receiving from a user association data associating a text string generated by the user with a uniform resource locator (URL)";

"storing the association data in a memory accessible to a browser of the user"; and

"using the association data and the text string to determine in the browser the URL"

Claim 45 contains similar limitations. Beneficially, the method of claim 29 personalizes operation of a user's browser by allowing the user to configure the browser to use personally chosen text strings to access URLs. This avoids the need for the user to input specific URLs or execute conventional searches to find them, a function that is particularly useful for often-visited webpages.

Konig does not disclose or suggest several elements of the claimed invention. König is entirely focused on how search results are generated, through the use of a User Model, unlike the claimed invention, which describes a particular method for retrieving web pages using text strings in place of complete URLs. While König describes the selection of web pages and web page configurations based on a User Model, there is scant disclosure of the workings of browsers. In particular, there is no mention of “storing [association data received from a user] [in a memory accessible to a browser of the user]”, or “using the association data and the text string to determine in the browser the URL” as claimed. Because König is silent on how URLs are handled, this is presumably accomplished through conventional means. Thus, the specific steps of “receiving from a user association data associating a text string generated by the user with a uniform resource locator (URL)”, “storing the association data in a memory accessible to a browser of the user”, and “using the association data and the text string to determine in the browser the URL” are neither taught nor inherently suggested by König.

For these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 29 and 45, and claims 29, 31-36, 45, and 47 which depend on them are patentable over König.

Examiner cited König for the dependent limitations of previously presented claims 2-21, 23-28, 30-36, 38-40, 42-44, and 46-48. However, for most of these distinct limitations,

Examiner has repeatedly referred to the same portions of Konig (e.g. 6:52-53, 7:45-57, 8:19-42, 17:12-67, 18:1-67, 22:27-67, 23:1-67) which do not specifically relate to the claimed dependent limitations, in essence making an omnibus rejection of the claims. This is improper. (See MPEP 707.07(d)). In the future, Applicants respectfully request that Examiner's rejections of specific elements refer to the specific portions of the cited reference that serve as the basis of rejection.

On the basis of the above amendments, consideration of this application and the early allowance of all claims herein are requested. If the Examiner believes that direct contact with the Applicants' attorney will advance the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned as indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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